

1. A process for selective removal of alkaloid from tobacco, which comprises the steps of extracting tobacco with organic solvent, contacting the resultant solvent extract with brine to remove alkaloid selectively from said extract, and recycling the alkaloid-relieved solvent.

2. A process according to claim 1 wherein the recycled alkaloid-relieved solvent is alkalized followed by contacting the alkaloid-enriched brine with a second organic solvent to remove alkaloid from said brine, and recovering alkaloid from the resultant alkaloid-enriched second solvent.

3. A process according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the organic solvent has a mutual solubility with brine no greater than has methylethyl ketone (and the solvent extract comprises saturated aqueous brine.)

4. A process according to any of the preceding claims in which the organic solvent is methylethyl ketone, methylisobutyl ketone, methylene chloride, trichloroethylene, hexane or isobutanol.

5. A process according to any of the preceding claims in which the organic solvent is methylethyl ketone and the brine comprises a saturated aqueous solution of sodium chloride.

6. A process according to any of the preceding claims in which the pH of the brine is between about 4.0 and about 7.0.

7. A process for the selective removal of nicotine from tobacco which includes the step of organic solvent extraction of said tobacco followed by contacting the nicotine-laden solvent with saturated aqueous brine whereby alkaloid is selectively removed from said solvent and recycling the nicotine-relieved solvent.

8. A method for recovering alkaloid from tobacco, substantially free from fats and waxes naturally occurring in tobacco, which comprises the steps of extracting tobacco with organic solvent, contacting the resultant solvent extract with brine, thereafter alkalizing the brine, contacting the alkalized brine with a second organic solvent, and recovering alkaloid from the second solvent.

9. A method for recovering nicotine from tobacco, substantially free from fats and waxes naturally occurring in tobacco, which comprises the steps of extracting tobacco with organic solvent, contacting the resultant solvent extract with saturated aqueous brine, said brine having a pH below 7, thereafter alkalizing the brine, contacting the alkalized brine with a second organic solvent, and recovering nicotine from the second solvent.
10. A method according to any of claims 7-9 in which the organic solvent is methylethyl ketone, methylisobutyl ketone, methylene chloride, trichloroethylene, hexane or isobutanol.
11. A method according to any of claims 7-9 in which the organic solvent is methylethyl ketone and the brine comprises a saturated aqueous solution of sodium chloride.
12. A process for the selective removal of alkaloid from tobacco substantially as described herein.
13. Alkaloid-free tobacco whenever prepared by a process according to any of the preceding claims.

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